

# Did You Know?

## *The Truth About Cocaine*

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**Get the Facts...**Cocaine affects your brain. The word “cocaine” refers to the drug in both a powder “cocaine” refers to the drug in both a powder (cocaine) and crystal (crack) form. It is made from the coca plant and causes a short-lived high that is immediately followed by opposite, intense feelings of depression, edginess, and a craving for more of the drug. Cocaine may be snorted as a powder, converted to a liquid form for injection with a needle, or processed into a crystal form to be smoked.

**Cocaine affects your body.** People who use cocaine often don’t eat or sleep regularly. They can experience increased heart rate, muscle spasms, and convulsions. If they snort cocaine, they can also permanently damage their nasal tissue.



**Cocaine affects your emotions.** Using cocaine can make you feel paranoid, angry, hostile, and anxious, even when you are not high.

**Cocaine is addictive.** It interferes with the way your brain processes chemicals that create feelings of pleasure, so you need more and more of the drug just to feel normal. People who become addicted to cocaine start to lose interest in other areas of their life, like work, friends, and sports.

**Cocaine can kill you.** Cocaine use can cause heart attacks, seizures, strokes, and respiratory failure. People who share needles can also contract hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, or other diseases.

**Know the law.** Cocaine in any form is illegal.

**Stay Informed:** Even first-time cocaine users can have seizures or fatal heart attacks.

**Know the Risks.** Combining cocaine with other drugs or alcohol is extremely dangerous. The effects of one drug can magnify the effects of another, and mixing substances can be deadly.

**Know the Signs....**How can you tell if someone is using cocaine? If an individual has one or more of the following warning signs, he or she may be using cocaine or other illicit drugs:

- Red, bloodshot eyes
- A runny nose or frequent sniffing
- A change of friends
- Acting withdrawn, depressed, tired, or careless about personal appearance
- Losing interest in work, family, or activities he or she used to enjoy
- Malnutrition
- Weight Loss
- Disorientation

Source of Information: DEA, SAMSHA, NIDA